

# Obituaries

## Sir Anthony Alment

Obstetrician who persuaded doctors to take note of feminist dissatisfaction with health care

Tony Alment perhaps did more than any other male doctor of his generation in furthering the cause of women's rights. As honorary secretary of the Royal College of Obstetricians from 1969, he recognised the increasing sense of dissatisfaction that the growing feminist movement was expressing about his specialty. He encouraged his colleagues to take this dissatisfaction seriously. He also supported the cause of women in medicine and encouraged part time training posts for women doctors.

Tony wrought change on a national scale while working in a district general hospital providing care for a community. Appointed to Northampton and Kettering General Hospitals in 1960, he introduced new standards of consultation and discussion to his outpatients, believing that a consultation was a discussion with the patient and so her views and thoughts were paramount. Inevitably this slowed clinics, but Tony was adamant in explaining to managers that this meant there was a need for more resources and not for him to cut standards. He worked hard to establish a system whereby women had a firm date for their operations and so could plan for the care of their children.

Opportunities to develop his ideas came when he joined Oxford Regional Health Authority in 1969. He served there until 1976, chairing the medical advisory committee for three years. When in 1969 he became honorary secretary of the royal college, he developed his belief that obstetricians should cooperate with managers, but managers should recognise and correct



resource constraints. He was president of the college from 1978 to 1981, during its jubilee, and was for many years its wine buyer; he left a well filled cellar whose memory lives on.

In 1940 he went up to St Bartholomew's, which had been evacuated to Cambridge. Enterprising as always, he supplemented his allowance by delivering coal and running a canteen at nearby airfields. By 1944 he was, as a senior student, working for many hours without sleep at Barts during the V1 and V2 bombardment. On qualifying and national service in the Royal Air Force, he undertook postgraduate training and from 1955 he was the resident physician accoucher at Barts,

being the last to hold that office. During this time he continued his research into continuous fetal monitoring, building his own equipment for phonocardiography.

In 1976 he chaired the Inquiry into Competence to Practice—which discussed education and responsibilities of individual doctors to their patients, to the community at large and to the management of the health services—and published the Alment report. The sagacity and vision of this was lost on the critics. If the medical profession had embraced Tony's ideas back then, various scandals might have been averted. He served as a member of the Maternity Services Advisory Committee and the CASPE (clinical accountability, service planning, and evaluation) research project into clinical budgeting.

Believing that current experience was vital to offering advice, he deliberately made no further contribution to medical thought after retiring at the age of 63.

An expert fly fisherman, he also worked in his engineering workshop repairing farm machinery for friends. He wrote about wine and studied church architecture, making a particular study of 11th century church fonts. He took up bell ringing in his seventies.

He leaves a wife, Elizabeth. [ROBIN SHEPPARD]

*Sir Edward Anthony John Alment, consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist Northampton General Hospital 1960-85; b Watford 1922; q Barts 1945; FRCOG, FRCP Ed, FRCGP; d 6 March 2002.*

## John Abels

*Former general practitioner Billingham (b Prague 6 August 1913; q Bratislava 1937), died 9 January 2002.*


John and his wife, Claire, escaped from Czechoslovakia just after the outbreak of the second world war. He saw active service first with the free Czech forces and later with the British Army. After the war, he joined a practice in Billingham, where he spent the rest of his working life. John's greatest interest was swimming. He was selected to swim for Czechoslovakia in the 1936 Berlin Olympics,

but withdrew on the advice of the World Jewish Federation in protest against Nazism. While in Billingham he and his wife set up a swimming clinic for asthmatic children. He leaves Claire; two daughters; and five grandchildren. [COLIN MACKENZIE]

## Barbara Ansell


*Former rheumatologist Taplow, Wrexham Park, and Northwick Park (b Warwick 1923; q Birmingham 1946; CBE, MD, FRCP, FRCS), died from ovarian cancer on 14 September 2001.*

Barbara Ansell first wanted to be a cardiologist but was persuaded against this as she was a woman—to rheumatology's gain. She identified the different types of arthritides and connective tissue diseases with onset in childhood and showed that they were different clinically and also, in some cases, pathologically and genetically from adult onset diseases. She pioneered the multidisciplinary management of children with arthritis. Her MD thesis on the classification of arthritis in children, which was built on careful, meticulous clinical observation, pro-

duced a classification system that has required only fine tuning with the advent of subsequent laboratory derived knowledge. She developed regional paediatric rheumatology clinics across the whole of the United Kingdom. Her husband, Angus Watson, predeceased her. [A W CRAFT, P WOO, B JARVIS] 

## Donald Walter Clark



*Former consultant anaesthetist Leeds (b 1925; q Guy's Hospital 1948), d 2 September 2001.* Donald Clark was associated with Leeds General Infirmary for almost 40 years. He was consultant for 33 years and generations of trainee anaesthetists learned their craft from "Uncle Donald." He conducted anaesthesia for cardiothoracic surgery, neurosurgery, paediatric, orthopaedic, and vascular surgery, and dental surgery. He oversaw the development of modern anaesthesia in Leeds. Those who worked with him found him completely unflappable. Donald was a distinguished freemason, a superb pianist and organist, and a keen cacti grower. He leaves a wife, Barbara; two children; and four grandchildren. [SUSAN WOOD] 


## Jill Draper

*Annual meetings officer BMA 1983-95 (b 1935), died from cancer on 8 March 2002.* Jill started to train as a nurse and came to the BMA at the age of 19, staying until she retired in 1995. Working in the Commonwealth and International Medical Advisory Bureau, Jill endeared herself to the many overseas doctors who came to the BMA for help and advice. She worked in the annual meetings department with Barbara Middlemiss for several years and took over as organiser in 1983. She was known for her unflappability and encyclopaedic memory, and was proud to receive the BMA's distinguished service award. Apart from her home, her garden, and her dog, Calum, music and ballet were her hobbies and she was a friend of Covent Garden. [LINDA BEECHAM]


## Duraiswami Gaspar

*Former consultant psychogeriatrician North Birmingham Mental Health Trust (b Madras 1934; q Madras 1958; MD, FRCP, FRCPsych), d 10 December 2001.*




"Sammy" Gaspar trained as a general physician in Madras, but came to the United Kingdom in 1968, when he embarked on a new career as a psychiatrist. Appointed consultant psychiatrist at Hollymoor Hospital, Birmingham, in 1974, he soon took over responsibility for the care of elderly patients with dementia and within a few years had developed a first class comprehensive service in old age psychiatry. Sammy was fond of teaching and assumed a regional responsibility for higher training before the Royal College of Psychiatrists established a Faculty for Old Age Psychiatry. He leaves a wife, Margaret; five children; and two grandchildren. [TOM FENTON, ELIZABETH M GREGG] 


## Christopher Giles

*Former haematologist North Staffordshire Hospital Centre (b Breslau, Poland, 1917; q Manchester 1940; MD), d 30 January 2002.* Christopher Giles (formerly Prausnitz) came to England with his parents in 1933, after Hitler's rise to power. After qualifying, he spent a brief spell in an internment camp. In 1942 he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and served in Britain, North Africa, Italy, and Austria. In 1948 he was appointed pathologist at the City Hospital in Stoke-on-Trent, where his first task was to set up a clinical laboratory. After the start of the NHS he became a consultant pathologist and remained in North Staffordshire until he retired in 1982. Giles became a haematologist in 1970 when it was decided that all pathologists in the district would specialise in a single discipline. He leaves a wife, Ruth; and two children. [JOHN GILES] 

## Rodney Irwin Green

*Consultant radiologist Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, North Wales, 1959-87 (b Liverpool 1924; q Liverpool 1948; MD), died on 3 February 2002 following a brain haemorrhage.* He took up radiology because he was partially deaf. He wrote his MD thesis on the radiological appearances of the soft palate and nasopharynx following treatment of the cleft palate. In 1959 he was appointed consultant radiologist to the Royal Alexander Hospital in Rhyl and set up a newly expanding service in north east Wales. He was a keen sportsman. He leaves a wife, Jean; four children; and 11 grandchildren. [SALLY GREEN] 

## Sydney Patrick Hall-Smith

*Former consultant dermatologist Brighton Health Authority and Hastings and Mid Sussex hospital groups (b 1919; q Edinburgh 1942; MD, FRCP Ed, FRCP), d 26 January 2002.* He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps in France, the Middle East, and Cyprus. Following demobilisation in 1947 he became senior registrar at the London Hospital and was appointed consultant dermatologist for two sessions in Brighton in 1951. Further sessions in Hastings and Mid Sussex followed and between 1953 and 1970 Patrick described himself as a "dermatological commercial traveller" commuting between hospitals. In 1970 reorganisation led to a full time appointment in Brighton. Patrick was the co-author of *Dermatology: Current Concepts and Practice*, which ran to three editions. Predeceased by his wife, Angela, he leaves four children and seven grandchildren. [RUPERT HALL-SMITH] 


## John Maguire Lyons

*General practitioner Hull 1961-97 (b Glasgow 1926; q National University of Ireland 1960), died from a ruptured aortic aneurysm on 9 October 2001.*

John was well known throughout the profession for his weekly cartoons in *Pulse* magazine, where he highlighted the grievances and frustrations of general practice during the period 1963-83. He took a keen interest in medical politics and represented Hull local medical committee and the East Yorkshire branch of the BMA at annual meetings. John was a devout Roman Catholic. His interests included fishing, horse racing, gun dogs, and music (he was an accomplished jazz pianist). He leaves a wife, Bernadette; seven children; and 12 grandchildren. [GORDON CAMERON]

## Ronald Victor Walley

*Former consultant in infectious diseases and respiratory intensive care Ham Green Hospital, Bristol (b Sussex 1921; q Cambridge/University College Hospital 1945; MD), d 26 September 2001.*

Ronnie was a pioneer in the measurement of pulmonary function and in positive pressure respiration. An accomplished inventor and engineer, he designed and built most of his own equipment, including an early kidney machine. As well as a wooden disposable smallpox unit, he installed a high risk infectious disease unit at Ham Green. He was well ahead of his time, living in a Corbusier style house, which he helped to design and build. His true passion was motor cycles, of which he owned many exotic types. Predeceased by a son, he leaves a wife, Betty; and two children. [CAMPBELL MACKENZIE] 

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